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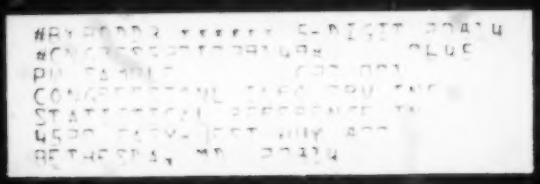
Winter 1992



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Title Output In 1990 at Record Low

Trade paper and technical categories drastically down; prices move slightly upward

BY CHANDLER B. GRANNIS

American book output in 1990 totaled 44,218 titles, a 17.2% drop from the 1989 figure of 53,446, according to R.R. Bowker data compiled in cooperation with the Library of Congress (Table 1). The 1990 figure was the lowest recorded by Bowker since 1980 (News, Sept. 6).

A partial recovery of the output level is predicted for 1991 by Beverly Lamar, managing editor of Bowker's *American Book Publishing Record/Weekly Record*, who has prepared the figures incorporated into the charts below. On the basis of titles listed up to August 31, 1991 in the *Weekly Record* and in *Paperbound Books in Print*, she foresees a possible 1991 title count "in the high forties."

While 1990 book output was declining, average prices of many books were edging upward in many areas.

TABLE 1

AMERICAN BOOK TITLE PRODUCTION

CATEGORY	1988 ALL HARD & PAPER	1989 FINAL HARD & TRADE PAPER Books	Editions	Totals	ALL HARD & PAPER	1990 FINAL HARD & TRADE PAPER Books	Editions	Totals	ALL HARD & PAPER
Agriculture	666	464	94	558	562	395	83	478	479
Art	1,602	1,358	202	1,560	1,569	1,016	117	1,133	1,145
Biography	2,250	1,855	261	2,116	2,193	1,600	217	1,817	1,875
Business	1,647	1,163	386	1,549	1,569	824	267	1,091	1,107
Education	1,113	871	164	1,035	1,054	812	151	963	978
Fiction	5,564	3,131	182	3,313	5,941	2,544	163	2,707	5,562
General Works	2,475	1,937	331	2,263	2,332	1,341	244	1,585	1,629
History	3,260	2,093	438	2,531	2,563	1,724	338	2,062	2,090
Home Economics	1,057	740	161	901	949	560	114	674	718
Juveniles	4,954	4,867	170	5,037	5,413	4,384	237	4,621	5,054
Language	628	454	118	572	586	452	132	584	601
Law	1,343	802	292	1,094	1,096	577	224	801	804
Literature	2,272	1,988	281	2,269	2,298	1,720	196	1,916	1,944
Medicine	3,900	2,765	653	3,418	5,437	2,349	516	2,865	2,896
Music	329	306	67	373	375	224	54	278	285
Philosophy, Psychology	1,955	1,652	298	1,950	2,058	1,292	192	1,484	1,605
Poetry, Drama	1,270	1,053	64	1,117	1,128	788	36	824	828
Religion	2,746	2,306	269	2,575	2,586	1,857	248	2,105	2,118
Science	3,743	2,698	574	3,272	3,288	2,120	435	2,555	2,564
Sociology, Economics	8,247	6,907	1,005	7,912	7,971	5,838	787	6,625	6,675
Sports, Recreation	1,099	801	142	943	1,077	664	108	772	908
Technology	2,694	2,196	477	2,673	2,690	1,528	361	1,889	1,903
Travel	669	515	173	688	901	324	97	421	450
Total	55,483	42,922	6,802	49,724	53,446	34,933	5,317	40,250	44,218

NOTE: Figures for mass market paperbound book production are based on entries in R.R. Bowker's *Paperbound Books in Print*. Other figures are from the *Weekly Record (American Book Publishing Record)* database.

TABLE 2

PAPERBACKS (EXCLUDING MASS MARKET)

CATEGORY	1988 TOTALS	1989 FINAL NEW BOOKS	NEW ED'NS	TOTALS	1990 FINAL NEW BOOKS	NEW ED'NS	TOTALS
Fiction	481	413	145	558	265	105	370
Nonfiction	16,610	13,083	2,972	16,055	10,315	2,341	12,656
Total	17,091	13,496	3,117	16,613	10,580	2,446	13,026

Among changes recorded in Table 1, total output of fiction in all formats dropped 6.4%, children's books by 6.6%, science titles by 22%, technology by 29.3%, sociology/economics by 16.2%, and medical titles by 46.7%.

Trade (other than mass market) paperbacks, Table 2, total 13,026, a 21.6% drop, and include a 33.7% falling off in fiction.

Mass market paperback output, Table 3, shows increases of 6.6%.

Titles imported in 1990 (Table 4) declined by 21.2% and translations (Table 5) by 31.6%.

Table A, hardcovers at all price levels, shows an average price per volume of $41.85, a 3.1% increase over 1989. Table A-1, eliminating prices of $81 or more, shows an average price of $31.47, a 4.6% rise.

Mass market paperback prices (Table B) increased by 5.8% to $4.57 average price per volume; fiction came to $4.15 per volume and children's books to $3.56.

Trade paperback prices, at $17.29 average per volume (Table C), remained virtually unchanged overall, but the fiction average rose 11%, to $10.95.

In compiling Table D, based on *Publishers Weekly* fall announcement issues, we noticed an increasing tendency to price books in round numbers—e.g., $20 instead of $19.95.

Each of the 23 standard subject groups used here represents one or more specific Dewey Decimal Classification numbers, as follows:

Agriculture, 630-639, 712-719; Art, 700-711, 720-779; Biography, 920-929, B; Business, 650-659; Education, 370-379; Fiction; General Works, 000-099; History, 900-909, 930-999; Home Economics, 640-649; Juveniles; Language, 400-499; Law, 340-349; Literature 800-810, 813-820, 823-899; Medicine, 610-619; Music, 780-789; Philosophy, Psychology, 100-199; Poetry, Drama, 811, 812, 821,822; Religion, 200-299; Science, 500-599; Sociology, Economics, 300-339, 350-369, 380-399; Sports, Recreation, 790-799; Technology, 600-609, 620-629, 660-699; Travel, 910-919. □

TABLE 3

MASS MARKET PAPERBACKS

CATEGORY	1988 FIN.	1989 FIN.	1990 FIN.
Agriculture	3	4	1
Art	15	9	12
Biography	67	77	58
Business	12	20	16
Education	15	19	15
Fiction	1,956	2,678	2,855
General Works	54	64	44
History	23	32	28
Home Econ.	73	48	44
Juveniles	307	376	433
Language	12	14	17
Law	4	2	3
Literature	34	29	28
Medicine	38	29	31
Music	1	2	7
Philosophy, Psychology	95	108	121
Poetry, Drama	46	11	4
Religion	17	11	13
Science	9	16	9
Sociology, Economics	63	59	70
Sports, Recreation	132	134	136
Technology	28	17	14
Travel	17	13	29
Total	3,021	3,722	3,968

TABLE 4

IMPORTED TITLES

HARD & TRADE PAPER ONLY

CATEGORY	1988 TOTALS	1989 FINAL BOOKS	1989 FINAL ED'NS	1989 FINAL TOTALS	1990 FINAL BOOKS	1990 FINAL ED'NS	1990 FINAL TOTALS
Agriculture	129	90	14	104	60	16	76
Art	154	110	18	128	60	8	68
Biography	190	130	14	144	93	7	100
Business	194	135	17	152	100	18	118
Education	239	221	11	233	203	14	217
Fiction	287	103	16	119	81	12	93
General Works	372	298	24	322	220	27	247
History	509	324	52	376	253	39	292
Home Econ.	36	23	8	31	9	3	12
Juveniles	104	91	10	101	89	6	95
Language	206	162	20	182	165	16	181
Law	191	126	32	156	96	31	127
Literature	330	263	10	275	207	17	224
Medicine	779	625	87	712	478	56	534
Music	74	73	5	78	41	11	52
Philosophy, Psychology	275	331	17	348	251	10	261
Poetry, Drama	224	134	13	147	98	7	105
Religion	162	151	22	173	148	22	170
Science	1,396	1,067	120	1,187	848	113	961
Sociology, Economics	1,825	1,464	111	1,575	1,170	71	1,241
Sports, Recreation	97	81	13	94	53	4	57
Technology	897	550	88	638	443	56	499
Travel	52	33	6	39	29	3	32
Total	8,626	6,587	728	7,315	5,195	567	5,762

TABLE 5

TRANSLATIONS INTO ENGLISH

HARD & TRADE PAPER ONLY

	ARABIC	CHINESE	DANISH	DUTCH	FINNISH	FRENCH	GERMAN	HEBREW	ITALIAN	JAPANESE	LATIN	NORWEGIAN	RUSSIAN	SPANISH	SWEDISH	YIDDISH	OTHER	TOTALS
1985 Final	8	27	17	40	5	416	369	29	92	59	30	13	182	86	28	15	N/A	1,412
1986 Final	29	29	26	48	3	485	470	45	110	116	36	9	185	93	26	11	N/A	1,791
1987 Final	33	39	24	45	3	580	486	45	115	65	38	16	245	130	36	9	N/A	1,908
1988 Final	27	34	23	49	5	570	501	45	129	95	43	12	256	162	47	14	N/A	2,012
1989 Final	45	26	49	33	3	442	453	56	142	84	38	12	251	121	36	12	N/A	1,893
1990 Final	26	43	23	36	8	371	236	34	76	76	33	7	174	117	29	5	N/A	1,294

NOTE: "Total" covers only the languages listed here.

TABLE A

HARDCOVER AVERAGE PER-VOLUME PRICES

CATEGORY	1977 PRICES	1988 PRICES	1989 FINAL VOLS.	1989 FINAL $ TOTAL	1989 FINAL PRICES	1990 FINAL VOLS.	1990 FINAL $ TOTAL	1990 FINAL PRICES
Agriculture	$16.24	$49.36	387	$19,801.59	$51.05	341	$18,891.08	$55.40
Art	21.24	39.96	941	47,332.14	50.30	704	29,381.77	41.74
Biography	15.34	25.99	1,485	40,598.34	27.34	1,296	37,519.31	28.95
Business	18.00	37.51	922	34,979.57	37.94	702	31,714.63	45.17
Education	12.95	33.55	534	20,086.59	37.62	537	20,829.65	37.80
Fiction	10.09	17.63	2,236	41,781.74	18.69	1,845	36,778.50	19.93
General Works	30.99	50.35	1,257	62,514.63	49.73	981	53,374.92	54.41
History	17.12	33.44	1,747	66,292.25	37.95	1,370	49,976.40	36.48
Home Economics	11.16	21.38	458	10,153.64	22.17	340	8,174.18	24.04
Juveniles	6.65	11.79	4,040	52,548.78	13.01	3,625	47,467.04	13.09
Language	14.96	40.42	297	14,063.96	47.35	297	12,943.10	43.58
Law	25.04	50.85	767	44,960.01	58.62	546	31,016.47	56.81
Literature	15.78	30.85	1,421	46,522.81	32.74	1,260	45,115.42	35.81
Medicine	24.00	66.59	2,455	171,519.32	69.87	2,150	154,519.42	71.87
Music	20.13	36.95	254	10,600.63	41.73	185	7,681.10	41.53
Philosophy, Psychology	14.43	34.75	1,158	42,330.09	36.55	931	37,523.90	40.30
Poetry, Drama	13.63	28.02	574	17,863.46	31.12	469	15,135.22	32.27
Religion	12.26	26.73	1,082	30,426.32	28.12	922	28,805.57	31.24
Science	24.88	66.91	2,341	161,294.00	68.90	1,931	145,218.40	75.20
Sociology, Economics	29.88	37.25	4,987	205,761.97	41.26	4,320	181,325.73	41.97
Sports, Recreation	12.28	27.33	476	14,005.76	29.46	379	11,389.21	30.06
Technology	23.61	65.26	1,902	135,113.90	71.04	1,412	108,176.48	76.61
Travel	18.44	26.22	239	7,497.26	31.37	158	4,614.18	29.20
Total	$19.22	$39.00	31,960	$1,298,048.76	$40.61	26,701	$1,117,571.78	$41.85

TABLE A-1

HARDCOVER AVERAGE PER-VOLUME PRICES—LESS THAN $81

CATEGORY	1987 PRICES	1988 PRICES	1989 FINAL VOLS.	1989 FINAL $ TOTAL	1989 FINAL PRICES	1990 FINAL VOLS.	1990 FINAL $ TOTAL	1990 FINAL PRICES
Agriculture	$32.44	$32.43	310	$10,558.34	$ 34.06	271	$ 9,184.28	$33.89
Art	33.07	33.85	886	33,438.34	37.74	667	24,825.17	37.22
Biography	22.75	23.81	1,447	35,991.57	23.49	1,269	32,261.36	25.42
Business	30.48	32.91	883	30,033.77	34.01	666	24,113.73	36.21
Education	29.37	32.03	524	19,142.64	36.53	524	19,025.70	36.31
Fiction	17.02	17.82	2,232	41,292.34	18.50	1,835	35,485.60	19.34
General Works	34.22	36.77	1,126	42,703.62	37.93	852	34,469.07	40.46
History	29.58	30.71	1,701	54,367.25	31.96	1,328	44,748.89	33.70
Home Economics	20.83	21.06	454	9,807.64	21.60	335	7,562.18	22.38
Juveniles	11.39	11.84	4,039	49,243.50	12.19	3,620	46,768.19	12.92
Language	33.26	35.06	262	9,106.61	34.76	262	9,007.42	34.38
Law	37.40	37.78	614	23,762.11	38.70	436	17,427.57	39.97
Literature	28.97	29.58	1,406	43,266.96	30.77	1,235	41,587.27	33.67
Medicine	38.33	49.79	1,684	67,723.14	40.22	1,432	59,238.01	41.34
Music	31.92	35.54	239	8,484.98	35.50	175	6,625.15	37.86
Philosophy, Psychology	31.48	32.78	1,117	37,397.54	33.40	870	30,954.09	35.58
Poetry, Drama	24.99	27.10	556	15,471.96	27.83	459	13,740.22	29.94
Religion	23.09	26.10	1,062	28,434.57	26.75	897	26,210.77	29.22
Science	43.02	51.86	1,944	71,545.04	36.80	1,265	57,698.24	45.61
Sociology, Economics	31.65	34.99	4,798	170,339.14	35.50	4,132	155,866.38	37.72
Sports, Recreation	23.32	24.45	469	12,852.26	27.40	376	10,961.71	29.15
Technology	41.68	53.45	1,337	59,084.88	44.19	928	42,833.83	46.16
Travel	24.45	24.87	231	6,156.26	26.65	157	4,479.18	28.53
Total	$28.96	$31.23	29,322	$880,114.46	$30.08	23,992	$755,010.01	$31.47

TABLE B MASS MARKET PAPERBACKS AVERAGE PER-VOLUME PRICES

CATEGORY	1988 PRICES	1989 FINAL VOLS.	1989 FINAL $ TOTAL	1989 FINAL PRICES	1990 FINAL VOLS.	1990 FINAL $ TOTAL	1990 FINAL PRICES
Agriculture	$ 4.32	4	$ 33.80	$ 8.45	1	$ 3.95	$ 3.95
Art	10.35	9	106.55	11.83	11	147.45	13.40
Biography	6.20	77	496.05	6.44	58	420.00	7.24
Business	7.55	20	178.50	8.93	16	125.75	7.85
Education	7.19	19	160.05	8.42	15	121.25	8.08
Fiction	3.97	2,628	9,924.15	3.78	2,855	11,579.99	4.05
General Works	6.92	64	450.75	7.04	44	302.45	6.87
History	6.56	32	203.70	6.37	28	174.80	6.24
Home Economics	6.27	48	345.80	7.20	44	297.01	6.75
Juveniles	3.18	376	1,197.85	3.19	433	1,543.25	3.56
Language	6.01	14	76.85	5.49	17	91.85	5.36
Law	4.59	2	13.90	6.95	3	19.85	6.61
Literature	5.44	29	176.85	6.10	28	180.60	7.09
Medicine	6.72	29	235.20	8.11	31	255.55	8.24
Music	2.95	2	13.45	6.73	7	102.65	14.66
Philosophy, Psychology	6.11	108	549.45	5.09	121	824.95	6.81
Poetry, Drama	3.29	11	59.80	5.44	4	24.35	6.08
Religion	4.76	11	69.60	6.96	13	90.45	6.95
Science	5.46	16	159.80	9.99	9	82.55	9.17
Sociology, Economics	5.82	59	369.00	6.24	50	344.45	6.88
Sports, Recreation	5.87	134	758.10	5.66	136	719.55	5.29
Technology	18.16	17	356.15	20.95	14	338.30	24.16
Travel	10.95	13	129.35	9.95	29	325.55	11.22
Total	$4.55	3,722	$16,063.15	$4.32	3,967	$18,134.68	$ 4.57

TABLE C TRADE PAPERBACKS AVERAGE PER-VOLUME PRICES

CATEGORY	1977 PRICES	1988 PRICES	1989 FINAL VOLS.	1989 FINAL $ TOTAL	1989 FINAL PRICES	1990 FINAL VOLS.	1990 FINAL $ TOTAL	1990 FINAL PRICES
Agriculture	$ 5.01	$17.14	155	$ 2,556.62	$16.49	124	$ 2,119.78	$ 17.00
Art	6.27	15.65	585	9,985.51	17.07	409	7,192.16	17.58
Biography	4.91	11.12	601	6,863.59	11.42	491	6,387.09	13.00
Business	7.09	19.43	533	11,347.10	21.29	368	7,105.78	19.31
Education	5.72	15.64	461	8,667.37	18.80	406	8,955.71	22.00
Fiction	4.20	10.07	1,026	10,124.65	9.87	810	8,873.44	10.95
General Works	6.18	23.85	912	24,571.91	26.94	569	16,507.21	29.00
History	5.81	13.88	791	12,412.16	15.69	643	11,232.22	17.47
Home Economics	4.77	11.61	422	5,104.22	12.10	330	4,257.44	12.90
Juveniles	2.68	6.13	941	6,249.32	6.64	890	6,050.65	6.80
Language	7.79	15.50	231	4,163.03	18.02	268	4,418.37	16.49
Law	10.66	24.73	291	6,927.56	23.81	235	5,534.47	23.55
Literature	5.18	13.33	726	10,767.35	14.83	622	9,499.37	15.27
Medicine	7.63	19.74	841	18,713.70	22.25	655	14,980.33	22.87
Music	6.36	14.54	110	2,029.23	18.45	88	1,614.90	18.35
Philosophy, Psychology	5.57	13.72	723	10,890.87	15.06	539	7,995.15	14.83
Poetry, Drama	4.71	10.36	518	5,686.15	10.98	337	4,120.58	12.22
Religion	3.68	9.99	1,434	15,867.07	11.06	1,146	13,918.82	12.15
Science	8.81	23.76	744	20,191.75	27.14	567	15,746.55	27.77
Sociology, Economics	6.03	16.69	2,584	52,523.69	20.33	2,173	42,504.97	19.56
Sports, Recreation	4.87	12.26	446	5,957.84	13.36	384	5,132.40	13.37
Technology	7.97	23.93	678	19,419.82	28.64	443	13,096.27	29.56
Travel	5.21	11.73	442	6,944.90	15.71	262	3,422.25	13.06
Total	$5.93	$15.01	16,195	$277,965.41	$17.16	12,759	$220,665.91	$ 17.29

TABLE D THREE CLOTH CATEGORIES—*PW* ANNOUNCEMENT FALL ADS

NOVELS*	AVG.	MED.
1991—148 vols./43 pubs.	$20.99	$19.95
1990—136 vols./35 pubs.	$19.84	$19.95
1989—187 vols./20 pubs.	$15.88	$18.95
1988—209 vols./39 pubs.	$18.48	$18.95
1987—198 vols./42 pubs.	$17.90	$16.95
1986—305 vols./53 pubs.	$17.13	$16.95
1985—219 vols./49 pubs.	$16.53	$16.95

*Not Mystery, Western, SF, Light Romances

BIOGRAPHY**	AVG.	MED.
1991—129 vols./63 pubs.	$25.83	$22.95
1990—135 vols./62 pubs.	$26.04	$24.95
1989—133 vols./61 pubs.	$22.64	$19.95
1988—132 vols./55 pubs.	$25.29	$22.50
1987—115 vols./64 pubs.	$25.30	$19.95
1986—125 vols./53 pubs.	$22.28	$19.95
1985—137 vols./60 pubs.	$22.09	$19.50

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1991—114 vols./43 pubs.	$30.84	$24.95
1990—153 vols./62 pubs.	$28.79	$25.00
1989—151 vols./71 pubs.	$28.92	$22.50
1988—154 vols./68 pubs.	$27.17	$24.95
1987—182 vols./66 pubs.	$27.05	$24.95
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1985—179 vols./70 pubs.	$24.25	$25.00

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